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RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 HANOI 001228

(C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - ADDED ADDRESSEE)

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/MLS, EAP/EP, OES/EGC, OES/STC
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR ANE, G/ENV, EGAT/ESP (CHIP BARBER)
STATE PASS TO EPA/OIA (DENNIS CUNNINGHAM AND MARK KASMAN)
STATE PASS TO NOAA/NOS/OIA (JONATHAN JUSTI)
USDA FOR FOREST SERVICE/INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS (CYNTHIA MACKIE AND
KELLI YOUNG)
INTERIOR FOR U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY (GREG SMITH)
BANGKOK PASS TO RDMA

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [SENV](#) [ENRG](#) [ECON](#) [KGHG](#) [VM](#)
SUBJECT: CLIMATE CHANGE

Ref: A. Hanoi 677 B. Hanoi 537

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11. (U) Summary: At the October 28 Donor Committee on Climate Change meeting, the Danish Ambassador detailed Prime Minister Dung's plan for the roll out of Vietnam's National Target Program to Respond to Climate Change. Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Cao Duc Phat reiterated the seriousness with which the Government of Vietnam (GVN) views climate change and provided statistics detailing sea level and temperature increases within Vietnam. Donors emphasized the need to coordinate Vietnamese responses with global efforts. End Summary.

Prime Minister Takes Lead in GVN Response

12. (SBU) On October 28, UNDP hosted a meeting of the Donor Coordination Group on Climate Change to brief representatives from various Embassies, multilateral organizations, and NGOs about the status of GVN efforts to address the impacts of climate change. Danish Ambassador, Peter Hansen, who co-chairs the Donor Coordination Group with UN Resident Coordinator John Hendra, provided details of his recent meeting with Prime Minister Dung. During that meeting, the Prime Minister announced his intention to release the GVN National Target Program (NTP) as soon as he obtains Politburo approval - possibly in November. The Politburo continues to try to balance the roles of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), both vying for primacy in the GVN response to climate change. While the Prime Minister assigned MONRE responsibility for the NTP, MARD has also developed its own climate change capabilities, making coordination difficult (Ref B).

13. (SBU) According to the Danish Ambassador, the Prime Minister does not plan to wait for approval from the National Assembly, but wants to issue the NTP directly from his office to show his commitment to the issue. Earlier this year, Prime Minister Dung agreed to personally head the GVN steering committee overseeing the NTP effort. He also raised this issue during his recent visit to Washington (Ref A). Once his office has published the NTP, the Prime Minister will meet in January 2009 with key members of the

National Assembly to review implementation and financing, before National Assembly consideration of follow up measures at its scheduled meeting in May 2009.

Agricultural Minister Stresses GVN Coordination . . .

14. (SBU) MARD Minister Phat stated that climate change was irreversible and that the GVN was firmly committed to working with the international community to address its impact. Phat agreed that the GVN needed to raise awareness of climate change throughout various ministries, including his own. Hoping to diffuse some of the tensions within the GVN, Phat stated that MONRE was in the best position to coordinate the GVN climate change response. While acknowledging friction between MARD and MONRE, Phat stated that he and the MONRE Minister have established excellent communications (Note: the Danish Ambassador told Phat that better communications need to extend to lower level officials as, well).

. . . and Notes Challenges

15. (SBU) Phat then described ongoing impact of climate change in Vietnam. According to Phat, Vietnam now faces stronger typhoons during longer storm seasons. Of greater concern, these typhoons, which historically came ashore in the north or central parts of the country, now are striking a broader geographical region, including the heavily populated and intensively farmed Mekong Delta. Phat stated that over the past 40 years, Vietnam has seen sea level rise of roughly five centimeters per decade and he expects this pattern to accelerate in the future. According to MARD statistics taken at sites throughout the country, average temperatures increased 0.8 degrees Celsius from 1980 to 2007. Other sampling had shown growing salt water intrusion in Ho Chi Minh City and the Mekong Delta.

Donors Emphasize Need to Plug Vietnam
into Global Efforts

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16. (SBU) Donors agreed to improve coordination. Representatives from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) highlighted the need to integrate Vietnamese responses into regional and global programs. IOM noted that Vietnam already sees a large number of people leaving the Mekong Delta during flood season to live temporarily in Ho Chi Minh City. This flow will increase dramatically as sea levels rise, floods increase, and salt water intrusion intensifies. Noting Vietnam's position as the world's second largest rice exporter, ADB emphasized that any shortfalls in Mekong Delta rice-crops (the Mekong Delta is Vietnam's rice basket) not only threaten domestic food security, but global rice supplies.

MICHALAK